Dereliction of duties by RPF during Mumbai blasts

2715. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that serial blasts took place in local trains in Mumbai on 11th July, 2006 and Railway Protection Force offered no help to victims;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the compensation paid by Railways to victims;

(c) what are the reasons that RPF fled from the scenes and local people and police came to the rescue of affected people; and

(d) the action proposed to be taken against concerned RPF personnel for dereliction of duties and beef up security in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) It is a fact that on 11.7.2006, 07 powerful bomb blasts took place in Ist Class Compartments of various (Electrical Multiple Units) EMU trains in Mumbai sub-urban services. But it is not correct to say that the Railway Protection Force (RPF) offered no help to victims.

(b) Compensation is paid only after a decree is awarded on a claim filed in the Railway Claims Tribunal by the victims or by dependents of the deceased passengers. Upto 23.11.2006, 272 compensation claims have been filed but no decrees have yet been awarded. However, Railways have distributed Rs. 12.26 crores as *ex-gratia* relief to the next of kin of the deceased's and injured persons.

(c) and (d) It is not a fact that Railway Protection Force fled from the scenes of the blasts. On the contrary, on receipt of the information, the Railway Protection Force staff immediately attended blasts sites and started relief and rescue works on war footing with the help of Railway Administration, State Administration, Police and local public. Senior Railway Officers including RPF Officers, disaster management teams and security agencies reached the site of incident and were actively involved in rescue operation along with local people and passengers.

After the incidents of serial bomb blasts in Mumbai (Western Railway) on 11.07.2006, additional Coys. of Railway Protection Force and Railway

Protection Special Force have been deployed in Mumbai. Close Circuit Television (CCTV) at important and sensitive Railway stations of Mumbai (Western and Central Railways) have been installed to keep surveillance on suspicious elements in Railway premises. Additional Sniffer dogs have been provided in Mumbai (Western and Central Railway) to conduct anti-sabotage checking at Railway stations. Hand Held Metal Detectors have also been provided on Railway Protection Force and Railway Protection Special Force staff for conducting intensive checking at Railway stations in Mumbai.

Two Committees headed by Divisional Railway Manger/Western Railway Mumbai and Divisional Railway Manager/Central Railway Mumbai consisting Officers from Civil Police, Government Railway Police, Railway Protection Force, Central Industrial Security Force and representative of Intelligence Bureau have been constituted to prepare a joint action plan for future in this regard.

Beautification of Patna Sahib Station

†2716. SHRI SHATRUGHAN SINHA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any scheme is under consideration for beautification of Patna Sahib railway station which is of religious importance;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) by when the work on this scheme is likely to begin; and

(d) if not, whether in view of religious and commercial importance of Patna Sahib railway station any scheme of such kind would be considered?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) Patna Sahib railway station has been selected for development as a Model Station. A plan for a new station building equipped with all passenger amenities along with development of circulating area has been prepared and has been under scrutiny in Railway Board for technical and financial viability.

(d) Does not arise.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.